



# U.S. Forest Service

## Fire and Aviation Management

### Information Briefing Paper

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Three Area Command Teams have been established for the 2015 fire season. These teams can assist and provide leadership in implementing the vision and tenets of the National Wildland Cohesive Fire Strategy. The Area Commanders are Dugger Hughes, Boo Walker, and Bill Van Bruggen.

Area Command is an Incident Command System organization established to:

1) **Oversee** management of large or multiple Type 1-3 incidents to which Incident Management Teams have been assigned. Area Command may become Unified Area Command when incidents are multi-jurisdictional;

and/or

2) **Provide and facilitate** strategic/decision support and coordination services to decision makers such as Geographic Area MAC groups, sub-geographic area MAC groups, Agency administrator(s), geographic area coordination centers, emergency operations centers, agency operations centers, or FEMA joint field offices. In this Area Command role the command function may not be necessary or appropriate.

The primary determining factor for establishing area command is the span of control of the Agency Administrator.

National Area Command teams are managed by the National Multi-Agency Coordinating Group (NMAC) and are comprised of the following:

Area Commander (ACDR);  
Assistant Area Commander, Planning (AAPC);  
Assistant Area Commander, Logistics (AALC); and  
Area Command Aviation Coordinator (ACAC).

Depending on the complexity of the interface between the incidents, other specialists may also be assigned in areas such as aviation safety, information, long term fire planning, and risk assessment and analysis.

Area Command Functions typically include:

- Establishing overall strategy, objectives, and priorities for the incident(s) under its command;
- Allocating critical resources according to agency priorities (i.e. aircraft, IHCs, incident support needs such as medical services, communications and internet operability equipment);
- Ensuring that incidents are properly managed;
- Coordinating mobilization, team transitions, and demobilization;
- Supervising, managing, and evaluating Incident Management Teams under its command;
- Minimizing duplication of effort and optimize effectiveness by combining multiple agency efforts under a single Area or Geographic Theater Plan.

Area Command DOES NOT:

- Prevent interaction between line officers and IMTs
- Usurp line officer authority/responsibility
- Direct and or interfere with IMT operations and/or tactics